WORKSHOP

CRITICAL APPROACHES TO IRREGULAR MIGRATION FACILITATION: DISMANTLING THE HUMAN SMUGGLER NARRATIVE

Scientific Organisers:
Luigi Achilli | Migration Policy Centre, European University Institute
Gabriella E. Sanchez | National Security Studies Institute, University of Texas at El Paso

Conference Room
Villa La Fonte, Via delle Fontanelle, 18 - San Domenico di Fiesole

5-6 APRIL 2016

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary mainstream narratives on migration, the human smuggler has earned a privileged if infamous spot as one of the most widely recognised and despised global predators. Smugglers are often referred to as orchestrators of senseless human tragedies along migration corridors, masterminds behind sexual exploitation rings, or amassers of untold riches made at the expense of asylum seekers, migrants and their families – in turn, often narrowly portrayed as infantile and ignorant. Perceived as racialised, hypersexual and greedy males from the global South, these facilitators of irregular migration have earned widespread notoriety in narratives on human and national security, particularly in the context of migration control efforts.

Media and authorities conceive the fight against clandestine migration as a war, a war where the evil is represented by the smuggler. The question is: is this a worthy war? Human smugglers certainly bear responsibility for many of the tragedies we are currently witnessing in the Mediterranean and elsewhere. However, our knowledge of irregular migration facilitation is often plagued with fragmented perspectives on the socio-cultural dynamics of the migratory journey, the facilitator-traveller relationship and their community dimensions. This is hardly surprising. Scholarship on the facilitation of irregular migration often draws exclusively from the experiences of government or law enforcement entities, or of the migrants, refugees and asylum seekers who were the unfortunate target of threats, scams or violence during their clandestine journeys, further obscuring the perspectives of those playing a role in their transits.

In light of the need to develop an adequate policy response to human smuggling, a better understanding of the phenomenon is pivotal in ensuring the stability of the receiving state and the security of the migrant/refugee. With this task in mind, this workshop aims to problematise the figure...
of the smugglers beyond overly simplistic generalisations and representations. There is a growing
corpus of empirical and critical work on the facilitation or brokerage of irregular migration within
migration regimes, which deserves to be fostered and strengthened. We are proposing critical and
empirical engagements on the topic of the facilitation and brokerage of irregular migration as
witnessed regionally and comparatively.

The workshop is co-organised by the Migration Policy Centre of the European University Institute,
Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, and the National Security Studies Institute of
the University of Texas at El Paso.
# Programme

## 5 April

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<td>9:00-9:15</td>
<td>Opening&lt;br&gt;Luigi Achilli</td>
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<td>9:15-9:30</td>
<td>Official Welcome&lt;br&gt;Philippe Fargues</td>
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<td>9:30-10:15</td>
<td>Introduction – Toward a new direction in human smuggling and brokerage studies&lt;br&gt;Chair: Sheldon Zhang</td>
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<td>10:15-10:30</td>
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<td>10:30-12:30</td>
<td>Session 1 – Human Smuggling Theory and Legislation&lt;br&gt;Chair: Ferruccio Pastore</td>
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<td>Problem or Solution: Migrants, states and the duality of the human smuggler&lt;br&gt;Jorgen Carling</td>
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<td>Defining human smuggling in migration research: an appraisal and critique&lt;br&gt;Ted Baird</td>
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<td>Humanitarian smuggling in a time of crisis: examples from Europe&lt;br&gt;Ilse van Liempt</td>
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<td>Is there a mutually reinforcing cycle between increased attention and power of state enforcement and the dynamic association of smuggling and/or trafficking?&lt;br&gt;Josiah Heyman and Sam Simon</td>
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<td>Session 2 – Smuggling as a form of Service&lt;br&gt;Chair: Jorgen Carling</td>
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<td>Smuggling as a social negotiation in transit spaces: pathways of Central American migrants in Mexico’s southern borders&lt;br&gt;Yaatsil Guevara</td>
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<td>What makes a good smuggler? Customer satisfaction among undocumented migrants&lt;br&gt;Daniel Martinez and Jeremy Slack</td>
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<td>Beyond common-sense notions about the smuggling of migrants: local findings from clandestine experiences from Ecuador to the US&lt;br&gt;Soledad Alvarez Velasco and Martha Ruiz</td>
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<td>Manufacturing smugglers: from irregular to clandestine mobility in the Sahara&lt;br&gt;Julien Brachet</td>
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Brokerage economies: crisis, mediation, and contested subjectivities across the Beitbridge border of South Africa and Zimbabwe
Xolani Tshabalala | Linkoping University

15:45-16:00 Coffee Break

16:00-18:00 Session 3 – Enforcement
Chair: Josiah Heyman | University of Texas at El Paso

Recent evolutions in the organisation of crossings of the Mediterranean Sea
Paola Monzini | Independent Scholar

The war on smuggling, at sea and in the public sphere
Maurizio Albahari | University of Notre Dame

Precarious waters: fishermen, people-smuggling and limited choice for earning money in Eastern Indonesia
Antje Missbach | Monash University

Mapping borderlands: drawing things together
Nora Akawi and Nina Kolowratnik with Jason Danforth | Columbia University

18:30 Drinks reception

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09:00-11:15 Session 4 – Solidarities, friendships, identity
Chair: Shahram Khosravi | University of Stockholm

The Struggle of Mobility: Organizing High-risk Migration from the Horn of Africa to Scandinavia
Tekalign Mengiste | University of Stockholm

Historical and community dimensions of smuggling in Afghanistan and Somalia
Nassim Majidi | Sciences Po

Friends and handlers: facilitating passage out of West Africa
Stephanie Maher | University of Washington

Indigenous migration merchants: Coyoterismo and indigenous mobility in Ecuador’s migration industry
Victoria Stone-Cadena | City University of New York

“This is Jihad”: piety and morality among Syrian smugglers
Luigi Achilli | Migration Policy Centre – European University Institute

11:15-11:30 Coffee break

11:30-13:30 Session 5 – Contradictions, Challenges, and Incongruences: the Multiple Angles of the Smuggling Experience
Chair: Anna Triandafyllidou | European University Institute

Smuggled or trafficked? North Korean refugees’ border mobility through smuggling networks
Kyunghhee Kook | University of Nottingham

Coyotaje and the construction of “el Camino” from Central America through Mexico
Noelle Bridgen | Marquette University
Rohingya by any other name: smuggling in Southeast Asia and the politics of terminology
Sarnata Reynolds | Refugee International

Crossing the border, blurring the boundaries: smuggling from the Horn of Africa
Milena Belloni | University of Trento

13:30-14:30  Lunch Break

14:30-16:30  Session 6: Risk, Security, Protection and Crime
Chair: Marie McAuliffe | Australian National University

Decency adrift at sea
Claudia Tazreiter | University of New South Wales

He used to be a pollero: smugglers and the securitisation of migration at the Mexico-Guatemala border
Rebecca Galemba | University of Denver

The Buddhist people smuggler: challenging contemporary stereotypes of exploitation and vulnerability through the Tibetan migration experience
Bodean Hedwards | Monash University

Casual encounters? Changing market conditions and organisational responses among smugglers of migrants and drugs
Gabriella Sanchez and Sheldon Zhang | UTEP and San Diego State University

16:30-17:00  Next Steps

17:00-17:15  Closing remarks
SPEAKERS

Luigi Achilli  Migration Policy Centre, Robert Schuman Centre, EUI
Nora Akawi  Columbia University
Maurizio Albahari  University of Notre Dame
Soledad Alvarez Velasco  King’s College London | FLACSO-Ecuador
Ted Baird  VU University Amsterdam
Milena Belloni  University of Trento
Julien Brachet  IRD - Sorbonne University
Noelle Bridgen  Marquette University
Jorgen Carling  Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)
Jason Danforth  Columbia University
Philippe Fargues  Migration Policy Centre, Robert Schuman Centre, EUI
Rebecca Galemba  University of Denver
Yaatsil Guevara  University of Bielefeld
Bodean Hedwards  Monash University
Josiah Heyman  University of Texas at El Paso
Shahram Khosravi  University of Stockholm
Nina Kolowratnik  Columbia University
Kyunhee Kook  University of Nottingham
Stephanie Maher  University of Washington
Nassim Majidi  Sciences Po
Daniel Martinez  George Washington University | UTEP
Marie McAuliffe  Australian National University
Tekalign Mengiste  Stockholm University
Antje Missbach  Monash University
Paola Monzini  Independent scholar
Ferruccio Pastore  International and European Forum on Migration Research
Sarnata Reynolds  Refugee International
Martha Ruiz  King’s College London | FLACSO-Ecuador
Gabriella Sanchez  National Security Studies Institute, University of Texas at El Paso
Sam Simon  University of Texas at El Paso
Jeremy Slack  George Washington University | UTEP
Anna Triandafyllidou  Global Governance Programme, Robert Schuman Centre, EUI
Xolani Tshabalala  Linkoping University
Ilse van Liempt  University of Utrecht
Sheldon Zhang  San Diego State University